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ANSWER TO A LETTER

From the Reverend
Mr. CHARLES LESLIE,

Concerning what he calls

The New Separation.



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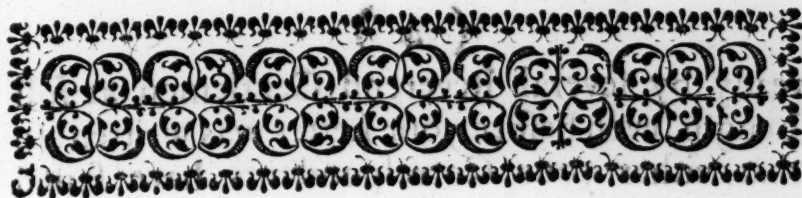
ANSWER

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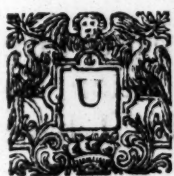
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A N S W E R

T O

Mr. *L E S L I E*'s
L E T T E R.

REVEREND SIR,



PON perusing your Letter written to Mr. *B* — concerning what you are pleased to call the *New Separation*, I was not a little surprized to find a Scrap of a Letter written to you a great while ago, by one who has a great *Value* for you, and in a *friendly* manner, exposed in Print before you did him the Honour to acknowledge the Receipt of it: He has been long perswaded that it had miscarry'd, because he never heard that it reached you till now. But I was still more surprized when I found the Design and Meaning of it so mistaken and perverted.

I SHALL not attempt to answer your Letter Paragraph by Paragraph, because that were to do again what has been effectually done al-

ready by several Reverend Gentlemen at full Length, even before your Letter was written; so that either your Correspondents have failed you, in not sending you what was published upon the Subject, or you are willing not to know what has passed upon it; either of which, one would think, might have saved you the Trouble of writing upon a Subject which you have not sufficiently considered, especially when you have shewed, by your Letter, that you are strangely mistaken in Facts, as well as very far behind-hand with this Part of the World, in this Dispute. So it appears that you have put yourself in a *Passion* against things which do not *exist*, and have given hard Words to People that wish you very well, and who are not guilty of what you lay to their Charge.

ALL I propose to do at present is, first to give a Copy of that Letter which you mention, so far as it relates to this Affair; and this I have Leave to do from him that wrote it; and he hopes you will take it as a Sign of his Respect for you, that he allows no more of it to be printed; for, all your Calling of Names, and undue Severities notwithstanding, he desires you should know, he has still a very great Honour for you. In the next place, I design to inform you, as you desire, in the three *Preliminaries*, which are very reasonable ones; and when I read them, I did not imagine you would have written upon the Subject untill you had been satisfied about them: And then I design to lay some things before you, as they occurred to me in reading over your Letter twice.

The

The Letter which was sent you is as followeth:

Dear Sir, London, Nov. 12. 1717.

“ I LATELY heard of a Letter from you to
 “ a Friend in the *Old-Baily*, and I begg’d a
 “ Sight of it, that I might be satisfied whe-
 “ ther it were such as it was reported to be.
 “ I read it, and find thereby that you have heard
 “ of some unhappy *Divisions* amongst some of
 “ your *Old Friends*, and that you are writing
 “ upon the subject Matter of them.

“ THE Friendship I have long had for you,
 “ and the just Esteem I still have of you, makes
 “ me think myself obliged to let you know,
 “ that, as far as I can percieve by your Letter,
 “ your *Informers* have neither been just to you,
 “ nor to the *Dispute*; for in the first place, I am
 “ very confident *Popery* is equally the Detesta-
 “ tion and Abhorrence of both Sides. And in
 “ the next place, there is not the least, nor smal-
 “ lest Article of *Popery* in the *Dispute*; it is en-
 “ tirely out of the Question, and neither Side
 “ denies this.

“ BUT that you may the better judge, I
 “ shall now shew you the true State of the
 “ Case, fairly and impartially, without lean-
 “ ing to one hand or the other.

“ THERE are some amongst us of all Or-
 “ ders, who are very desirous to have some
 “ things, which they believe to be *Primitive*,
 “ restored to Practice; particularly they think
 “ *Edward VI.*’s first *Liturgy* preferable to that
 “ now

“ now in Use amongst us, and would be glad to
 “ have it *restored* entirely; yet rather than *di-*
 “ *vide*, or than the *Peace* of the *Church* should
 “ be *broken*, they have offered to be satisfied
 “ with what follows.

“ *First*, THAT *Water* be constantly *mixed* with
 “ the *Wine* in the *Holy Eucharist*: Believing our
 “ *Blessed* LORD gave it so, and that it was ever
 “ the *Practice* of the whole *Catholick Church* both
 “ *Eastern* and *Western*, from the *Beginning* to
 “ this *Day*, except amongst the *Calvinists* and
 “ some other *Seċtaries*; and in our *Church*, when
 “ *Bucer* prevailed, upon the Bottom of *Calvin*
 “ and *Zwinglius*, to get it left off, in the Re-
 “ form of King *Edward VI.th* first *Liturgy*.
 “ *Dr. Hickes* found this *Custom* of *mixing Water*
 “ with the *Wine* in *Barkin Church*, practised it
 “ there, and every where else, throughout the
 “ Course of his *Life*; and it is also, and hath
 “ long been, the *Practice* of several other *Chur-*
 “ *ches* in *London*, &c.

“ *Secondly*, THAT the Words *Militant here on*
 “ *Earth* be always omitted out of the *Rubrick*
 “ of the *Prayer for the whole State of CHRIST'S*
 “ *Church*; as being (say they) an *Unprimitive*
 “ *Contraction* of that *Article* of our *Creed*, THE
 “ COMMUNION OF SAINTS, and bringing
 “ of it into too narrow a *Compass*, and as being
 “ inconsistent with the *Paragraph* of *Commemo-*
 “ *ration*, towards the latter End of that *Prayer*,
 “ which was added since the *Restoration*.

“ *Thirdly*, THAT in the *Prayer of Consecration*,
 “ the *Petition* may be always, *Hear us, O Mer-*
 “ *ciful*

“ *ciful FATHER, we most humbly beseech Thee;*
 “ *Bless these thy Creatures of Bread and Wine,*
 “ *and grant that we receiving them, &c.*

“ THIS they demand, believing that the
 “ Words of *Institution* are not so properly
 “ Words of *Consecration*, as of *Authority*, or giv-
 “ ing *Power to Consecrate*. And although they
 “ do prefer the whole *Paragraph* which is in
 “ King *Edward VI.th* first *Liturgy*, whereby
 “ the *FATHER* is invoked to send the *HOLY*
 “ *GHOST* upon that Occasion, yet for *Peace*,
 “ and rather than *divide*, they are satisfied if
 “ the Word *Bless* be added, as above, believ-
 “ ing that the *Invocation* is thereby *implied*,
 “ and *virtually* performed.

“ *Fourthly, THAT* the Prayer of *Oblation*, [even]
 “ as it is worded in the present *Liturgy*, be al-
 “ ways added immediately after the Words of
 “ *Institution*, before *Communicating*. And this
 “ they demand upon the Belief that the *Holy*
 “ *Eucharist* is a *Sacrifice proper*, and therefore
 “ to be *offered* before it be *consumed* or *eaten*.
 “ And you may remember who wrote a *Pre-*
 “ *face* to a *Book*, which asserts, that it is a *pro-*
 “ *per Sacrifice*.

“ TO the Proposals above mentioned, this
 “ following *Paragraph* is added.

“ THAT, notwithstanding our *Persuasion*,
 “ that none of these *Primitive Usages* can be
 “ *dispensed* with, yet we do not insist on their
 “ being received by our *Brethren* as necessary
 “ things; provided they *officiate* by them, they
 “ may, if they please, declare their *Compliance*
 “ means

“ means no more than *Temporary Concessions*,
 “ and *Expedients* for Union.

“ Now I have given you the true *State* of
 “ the *Case* at full Length, for these are all the
 “ *Demands*, and there is no more asked; in-
 “ deed there is more wished for by those who
 “ demand these, but no more is insisted upon.
 “ Do you then judge, whether this be intro-
 “ ducing *Popery*, or making the *Reformation*
 “ more *defensible*. By *Popery* however I do not
 “ mean all that the *Latin Church* holds and
 “ practiseth, but only what she hath introduced
 “ of *Error* and *Corruption*; else farewell our
 “ *Old Creeds*, as well as her *New one*. So much
 “ for the one Side of the Question.

“ ON the other hand, none of the worthy
 “ Gentlemen who are against these *Alterations*
 “ do say, that they are *sinful*, or not to be wished
 “ for, or that they are not *Primitive*. They are
 “ against them only because they think this is
 “ not a proper Time to introduce them; and
 “ that from *political Considerations*. And al-
 “ though they think them not *essential*, and that
 “ *rebus sic stantibus*, they are against them, yet
 “ they wish they may be *introduced*, or *restored*,
 “ at some other Time.

“ FARTHER, the *chief Men* who are against
 “ these *Alterations* have, one or other of them,
 “ and amongst them, *practised* all which the o-
 “ ther Side demandeth. For Instance, Mr. —
 “ administred the *Holy Sacrament* at Dr. *Hicker's*
 “ for Years, where the good *Dean* always took
 “ Care to have *Water mixed* with the *Wine*.

“ And

“ And when he (the *Dean*) officiated himself, he
 “ always for several Years, whenever I was with
 “ him, which was very often, added the full Pa-
 “ ragraph of invoking the FATHER to send the HO-
 “ LY GHOST, &c. and never said *Militant here*
 “ on Earth, and always placed the Oblatory Prayer
 “ before Distribution. Again, Mr. — has for ma-
 “ ny Years placed the Oblatory Prayer before Di-
 “ strribution, &c.

“ But by your Letter, it seems, your Informers
 “ gave you one very *wicked Innuendo*, (for I can-
 “ not think it had its *Rise* in your *Breast*) as if they
 “ who desire these *Alterations*, did so with a *politi-*
 “ *cal View*; but I hope now you will easily per-
 “ ceive how false an *Aspersion* that is, since there is
 “ no *Declining* towards *Popery* in any of their De-
 “ mands.

“ Now, dear Sir, my Reason for being at this
 “ Pains to give you an Account of the true State
 “ of this *Dispute*, is from true *Friendship*, and there-
 “ fore I pray you to look e’er you leap; write
 “ not in the *Dark*, and fight not against those that
 “ do not fight against you; and consider that it
 “ hath pleased Almighty GOD to bless several of
 “ your *Writings* most extraordinarily, by making
 “ some of them the *Means* of the *Conversion* of ma-
 “ ny Thousands to *Christianity*; others of them in
 “ settling and fixing many who *wavered*; and o-
 “ thers of them in making very many imbibe
 “ much better *Notions*, both of Church and State,
 “ than they had heard or thought of before.
 “ Were it not a great Pity then to forfeit any
 “ Part of so valuable a *Reputation*, so well pur-
 “ chased, by either *Writing* in the *Dark*, or by
 “ *Writing* against what yourself has publicly ap-

“ proved of, or recommended to the World ; or by
 “ Writing against any Thing or Usage which is tru-
 “ ly Primitive, and not so much as pretended to be
 “ otherwise. Therefore I pray you, for GOD’s
 “ sake, and for your own sake, that you attempt no
 “ such Writing, untill you be first perfectly well
 “ informed of the State of the Case ; and when you
 “ are fully satisfied that you are so, by hearing
 “ what is said *hinc inde*, then, in GOD’s own
 “ Name, do as GOD shall direct you, without
 “ Prejudice, Passion or Partiality. And for what
 “ I have now written as *Fact*, you have my Leave
 “ to publish me *infamous* to the World, if, after
 “ the strictest Examination, you find that I have
 “ vary’d from *Truth*.

THIS is the Letter you are pleased to refer to
 p. 5. without telling when it was dated, which
 was before the *New Offices* were made, and then
 indeed there was more wished for than the *four*
Proposals ; but so soon as these *Offices* came out,
 which was on the 5th of *April*, 1718. we were per-
 fectly satisfied, and are so far from demanding
 more, that now, even now, we would be overjoy’d
 to have our old Friends accept of the *four Propo-*
sals ; which if they did, or whenever they think fit
 to do, we will receive them with open Arms, and
communicate with them at their *Altars*, and make
 them very welcome to *communicate* at ours. Which
 then is to blame, we, for acting according to our
Consciences in *Communion* with the whole *Catholick*
Church from the Beginning till very lately ; and
 that only in a little Corner of the Earth ; or they,
 who refuse to *communicate* with us upon *Terms*
 confessedly *Primitive*, and not *sinful*, who have
 no

no material *Objection* against our *Proposals* of *Peace* and *Unity*, but the Word *Now*? It is never well when *Religion* is made subservient to *Politicks*: S. Paul commanded S. Timothy to *preach the Word*, and to be *Instant in Season, and out of Season*. He had not the same Notion of *Now* that hath prevailed of late. The *Reformation* had as strong *Objections* against it to the full, as these *Alterations* have from the *Now*; and the *Papists* had a longer *Prescription* in favour of their *Popery*, than can be pleaded for the *puritanical Alterations*, which were introduced upon the first *Reformed Liturgy* of King *Edward VI.* And if that be of any Weight in this Case, it had a *Parliamentary Establishment* as well as an *Ecclesiastical*; and the *Parliament*, which confirmed the second *Liturgy*, shewed evidently, by the *Character* it gave of the first, of its being compiled BY THE AID OF THE HOLY GHOST, that it yielded to give a Sanction to the second, *unwillingly*, and not from thinking it better than the first. And after all, even that second hath been oftner than once *Revised*, and has stood several times *Corrected* and *Amended*, though never to the Standard of the first. But the hard Names which are now given us, who are for bringing it up to the full of its *Primitive Purity*, would make Strangers to the Dispute believe we were *corrupting* the *Sacred Records*, and introducing the *Worship* of the *Devil*, by *sacrificing Children* to him; for *Popery* is now become perfectly *Orthodox* in its *Infallibility*, in its *Worshiping* of *Saints* and *Angels*, in its *half Communion*, in its *Purgatory*, &c. in comparison of these new *Separatists*, *Enthusiasts*, *Seekers*, *Schismaticks*; with a very long, &c. of more hard Names given; and others, we doubt, which are now kept in *Potto*,

to be lustily thrown about upon a good Occasion ;
and all this for the Word *Now*.

IN the next place, I design to satisfy you as well as I can concerning your three very reasonable *Preliminaries*, and I wish you had held there ; the first whereof is,

“ WHO made the Separation ? Did they separate from you, because you put Water in your Wine ? Or did you separate from them, because they did not ? ”

I ANSWER, They made the *Separation*, because we put *Water* in our *Wine* at the *Altar*, although some of themselves did it at the *Altar*, and some still do it (by Principle) but unknown to the People : And although we are willing to *communicate* with them upon the *Terms* above mentioned in the Letter.

YOUR *second Preliminary* is, “ By what Authority was this done ? ”

I ANSWER, By *Authority* of all the *Bishops* of that *Communion* before any *Separation*. This you may perhaps wonder at, but yet it is Fact ; for all of them met at one of their Houses, except one, who sent word he was indisposed, and there it was agreed by all present, that K. *Edward VI.*th’s first *Liturgy* should be *restored* to Practice ; and untill that could be done, a *primitive Form* of invoking the FATHER to send the HOLY GHOST upon the *sacred Symbols*, should be added to the present *Consecration Prayer* in the publick *Liturgy*. This was unanimously agreed to by all present, and all the *Bishops* of that *Communion* were present, except one, who made no *Objection* against what was thus agreed to by his *Brethren*, when he had first an Account given him of their *Proceedings*, nor indeed
for

for a good while after, untill that the ~~Now~~ struck their Fancies : And if any of the worthy Gentlemen that were then present have happened to forget what passed at that Time, there are *Authentick Documents* somewhere, as I am very well informed, to prove all this. Thus, I think, I have sufficiently satisfied your second *Preliminary*.

YOUR *third Preliminary* is thus : “ I would be
“ glad to know the Steps and Measures were taken,
“ and the reasonable Methods pursued in
“ the Determination of the Synod, or major
“ Number of the Episcopal College.

THIS *third Preliminary* is of the less Consequence, in that I have so plainly answered the two former ; nor can I pretend to answer it so clearly as I would, unless I were to give you the History of above a Year's Proceedings, which would be too tedious, and otherwise inconvenient. But this I do averr to you, that these Gentlemen with the long and hard Names acted with *Candor*, and according to *primitive Rules*, and with great *Regard* to their *Brethren*, in their whole Procedure. And there are sufficient *Documents* for this also somewhere, which are very *Authentick*.

AND now, in the last place, I design to lay before you some Things as they occurred to me in my first and second Reading of your Letter to Mr. B —. I do not pretend to rank them in due Order, for I ramble after you, and write them as I go along.

PRAY Sir, consider, Whether it be just to condemn any one, without first hearing what he hath to say in his own Defence ? And how you come invested with this *condemnatory Power* over your *Superiors* and *Equals* ?

WHE-

W H E T H E R *Haranguing* and *Declaiming* against People, be right *Reasoning*, good *Divinity*, or the way to make *Converts*?

W H E T H E R *Reflections* and *bitter Expressions*, and *Calling of Names*, be *decent* in the Mouth or from the *Pen* of a *Clergy-man*, especially in *Religious Matters*?

W H E T H E R there is either *Precept* or *Example* in *Holy Writ*, to give Countenance to such *contemptuous, ludicrous* Treatment of any *Adversary*, especially of *Superiors, Equals, and Brethren*?

W H E T H E R the *Holy Scriptures* themselves may not suffer by your *Arguments* against *Tradition*?

Is it fair to put those *Traditions* of the *Jews*, by which they *perverted* their Law, and made it of none Effect, and which were most justly condemned by our *Blessed LORD*, upon the same Footing with the truly *Apostolical Traditions*, attested by the *concurring Evidence* of the *Illuminated Fathers* of the first and purest Ages of *Christianity*?

T H U S the *Sectarian* Holders-forth in *Oliver's* Days preached upon *Judges v. 23.* and assured their *Audiences*, that all who did not assist *Oliver* against the *King*, were *Cursed* under *Meroz*.

C A N we be *Dutiful Christian Children*, if we *despise* and *ridicule* the *Illuminated Fathers* of the first *Ages of Christianity*? Is not this giving too great Advantage to the *Atheists, Deists, &c.* of this Age, whom you have so solidly confuted?

How came the *Church of England* to be *infallible* since the *Reformation*? If she is, how came it to pass that she allowed *Calvin, Bucer, Peter Martyr*, and other *Puritans*, to *mangle* her first *Reformed Liturgy*? If she is not, how came her present *Liturgy* to be *unalterable* now more than formerly,

merly, and to be set up in *Opposition* to the most ancient *Liturgies*, and even the *Mistakes* and *Faults* of it to be maintained so *obstinately*, and with such unbecoming *Warmth*, that, if *Christianity* were at Stake, no greater Outcry could be made?

Is it reasonable to set up any *Modern* unprimitive Practice against *Antiquity*, *Universality*, and *Consent*?

Is it *decent* to compare the Revival of *daily* or *frequent Communion*, enjoined by K. Edward VI.th first Common Prayer-Book, to pursuing a *Flea* that leapt out of a *Dust-Basket*?

CAN a *Clergy-man* expect to reform the *Laity* into a *decent* Way of speaking of the *Holy Eucharist*, if he sets them an *Example* of treating it *disrespectfully*, or with too much *Levity*, or gives way to an imaginary *Wit* on so *grave* and *Divine* a Subject?

DOETH a lawful *Vocation* or *Calling*, lawfully prosecuted, *disqualify* a Person from *Religious Duties*, even the Highest? If it doth, whether is not this finding Fault with GOD himself, upon the Rebound, for not only allowing of such *Callings*, but also of making them frequently *necessary* by his *Providence*? If thus it is not, where is the *Strength* of your *Exchange Argument*? Unless you can shew that a Man cannot go innocently into a *Tavern*, or drive a *Bargain* without *Fraud*.

DO you propose to convince those that are for the *Restoration* of some *primitive Usages* that they are in the wrong, by calling them *Disciples* of Mr. *Stephens*, who, you own, was an *Enthusiast*? Or by calling them *Separatists*, *Seekers*, *fanciful*, *puffed up*, *turbulent*, *Schismaticks*, &c. And what is the Man who gives these fine Names to People who do not deserve them from him?

How

How do you reconcile their being *Enthusiasts*, as being descended from Mr. Stephens their *Founder*, and their being *Disciples of Rome* at the same time, and yet make it out that they want to be *reformed back to Rome* again, in order to become good *Church of England Men*? This is pretty intricate, and needs a *Commentary*.

I HAVE heard of a *Tub-Preacher* who said, I will tell you, Beloved, there are four Ways of following CHRIST; the first is, to go before him; the second, to go up-sides with him; the third, to go behind him; and the fourth, not to follow him at all. There is *Riddle for Riddle* for you.

Y ou very well know, Sir, that the *Church of Rome* has made such a number of Things necessary before she will acknowledge that *Consecratur Sacramentum*, or that there is a *true Sacrament* (of the *Altar*) that it is indeed a *Miracle* if ever she hath it once, in Truth, upon her *Altars*; for though she doth not make the not mixing of *Water* with the *Wine* a *Nullity*, yet if the *Flower* of one *unripe Grain of Wheat*, and the *Juice* of one *unripe Grape*, happen to be in the *Bread* and in the *Wine*, this spoils all. Doth our *Restoring the Mixture*, which was ever the Practice of both the *Greek* and the *Latin Church*, and which was *enjoined* by our first *Reformers*, and which was *disused* only in Compliment to *Calvin* and other *Puritans*, make us more odious to you than *Rome* herself, though she robs the *People* of the Cup? If so, I pray GOD to forgive you.

DO TH not that *Text* you cite, in 1 Cor. xv. 29. about *Baptizing for the Dead*, evidently shew, that there are *Passages in Holy Writ* which need an *Explanation*. And if so, whether were the *Illuminated*

ted Fathers, or are the *Moderns*, who often declare against *Illumination*, most likely to give us the true *Sense* of such *Passages*?

Is it fair to make the Mixing of *Water* with *Wine*, as *Atrocious* as *Sacrificing* of *Children* to the *Devil*, or as *Nadab* and *Abihu's* offering of *Wild-Fire* in *Rebellion* against *GOD*?

I REMEMBER to have heard of a certain *Dis-senting Teacher* in the *North*, who maintained that it is as great a *Sin* to cut a *Cabbage* on a *Sunday*, as to cut a *Man's Throat*; and I am very sorry that you can now be quoted for putting the *Sacrificing* of *Children* to the *Devil*, and the *Mixing* of *Water* with *Wine* at the *Christian Altars*, upon a *Level*.

WHEN you was employed in *Converting* the *Quakers*, which was a noble Employment, and in which *Almighty GOD* was pleased to bless you and your *Pious Endeavours* with great and wonderful *Success*, they very often called you all the out-of-the-way filthy Names they could think of, or that their *Malice* could suggest, such as *Viper*, *Steeple-house-man*, a meer *Letter-man*, *blind*, *ignorant*, &c. you did not like it, although you bare it and all their *Reproaches* with much *Christian Patience*; yet you could calmly tell them, Pray read *Jude 9.* and from thence learn who is the *Father* of *Railing* as well as of *Lying*. How came you then to approve in your own Practice now, what you and every one else, except themselves, thought wrong in theirs then?

IF the Traditions mentioned *1 Cor. xi. 2.* and *2 Thess. ii. 15.* have no *Descent*, as you term it; will not the whole *Grand* and *Sacred Depositum* delivered by the *FATHER* to the *SON*, and by him to his *Apostles*, and by them to their *Successors*,

and so *downwards* from Generation to Generation, lose of its Evidence and binding Force upon us? And if so, is it not a noble Achievement to make it less credible?

WHETHER doth *Deut. iv. 2.* relate to the *Jewish Law* only, or to the *Gospel* also? If to the *Law* only, then pray consider your Argument drawn from it; for as I take it, the whole *New Testament* has been added since: If to the *Gospel* also, then I wish to know whether you think that *Text* a *Precept* or a *Prophecy*? Yet mistake me not, for I am very far from thinking it *lawful* to *add* to, or *subtract* from, or to *alter* the *Gospel*; but I think this cannot be proved from *Deut. iv.* Yet *Gal. i. 8, 9.* doth prove it effectually, so the thing is true; but you have happened to go too far back to prove it. And thus it often fares with those who are too busy with the *Old Testament*, and fancy they find out in it all the smallest *Transactions* of every little *Corporation* in every Corner of the Earth.

IF it be found upon Tryal, that CHRIST did make use of the *Mixture* when he *instituted* the *Holy Eucharist*, will it be proper to ask, "What End of Religion is served by it?" And in this Case is it reasonable to expect that we shall be more *Wise* or more *Holy* for leaving out what CHRIST thought fit to use, than by following his *Example*, by *whose Stripes* we are *healed*?

AND if it be *doubtful*, whether CHRIST did make Use of *Water* upon that solemn Occasion, and if it cannot be proved that he did not make use of it, then is it not *safer* and more *modest* to make use of it along with the whole *Christian World*, than to be wise in our own *Conceits*, and run counter to all *Christianity* without any *Certainty*,

tainty, especially in a Matter which was never so much as alledged to be sinful? For thus we may happen to omit the doing as he did. I think this is putting the Case at the lowest.

How came it to be lawful to *consecrate* by any *Form* of Words, since CHRIST hath set us no particular Form whereby to *consecrate*?

How came *Baptizing* of *Infants* to be lawful, or indeed not to be *sinful*, since there is no particular *Precept* for it in the *New Testament*?

How came the (Saturday) *Sabbath* to be laid aside, and the first Day of the Week to be kept as the LORD'S Day without a particular *Precept*?

If it be *lawful*, as you acknowledge, to *take away* and *alter* some *Practices* of CHRIST himself, and of his *Apostles*, by what *Power* was this done? And is it not as lawful to *revive* or *restore* such *Practices* by the same *Power*.

Is not the *Disuse* of the *Practices*, which you plead for, founded upon *Tradition*? And if so, doth not this raise even that very *Tradition* which you are against so high, as to make you think yourself safe in such *Disuse*? Is *Tradition* only valuable when it gives Countenance to the *Disuse*, *Abolition*, or *Alteration*, of the *Practices* of CHRIST and his *Apostles*, but becomes *abominable*, even a *Nebushtan*, when it is brought to give Countenance to the *Restoration* or *Revival* of such *Practices*?

You have been very kind in vouchsafing to tell your *separating Schismatical, &c.* 's great News, that the *Greeks* mix warm *Water* with their *Wine*; we know they do, but not always; and we know also that they *administer* the *Holy Eucharist* to the *Laity* in *both kinds*. And now I must tell you News in my Turn. The *Primitive Church*, all o-

ver the World, kept up a very strict Correspondence within herself evere where by *Communicatory Letters*. And I am of Opinion that it will puzzle you to prove that *Navigation* and *Commerce* was not as *extensive* in the then *Christendom* as it is now, especially so far as the *Correspondence* of *Christian Churches* with one another was concerned.

If it be wrong in the *Romanists* to threaten *Damnation* to all who are not of their Party, is it better in others? And if it is not a *damnable Sin* to revive *Primitive Usages*, which are not *sinful* nor *shameful*; why all this *Pother*, and such *hard Words*, which nothing can justify, unless it were an *Apostasy* from the *Faith*?

If a Man want a *Leg* or an *Arm*, is it *damnable* to say he is not a *perfect Man*; and because he is not a perfect Man, is he therefore *no Man*, or *not a Man* at all? Or is he more *perfect* because he wants a *Limb*, than if he had it? Or is it a good Reason for a Man not to be *well* when he may, because he hath been long *sick*?

WERE not the *Bishops* and *Priests* of *England*, before the *Reformation*, as strongly bound down not to alter the *Worship* of the then *Church of England*, as any of her present *Clergy* are, or can be now, not to alter what they have given their unfeigned Assent and Consent unto? How then is the *Reformation* to be *justified* upon your Bottom?

Is not the *Practice* of the Court of the *Index* at *Rome* as strong and as dangerous against the *Holy Scriptures* themselves, as against the *Writings* of the *early Fathers*, for *Rome* has had both in her *Possession*. How can your Reasoning then be of any Force, unless you could prove that the Court of the *In-*
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dex was coëval with Christianity in Rome, and that its Jurisdiction was extended all over the East and Africa, as well as the West? For if not, then it is plain there must have been a very great Number of Copies both of the Holy Scriptures and of the Fathers dispersed all over the Christian World before it was erected; so that if they of that Court were as great Hucksters as it is possible for Men to be, yet they could hurt nothing before they had a Being; nor is it easy to believe that all Copies of either the Holy Bible or of the Fathers could have fallen into their Clutches since their Erection.

How doth S. Paul's referring himself to CHRIST discharge or reject the Evidence of the Fathers during the Charismata?

By what new Construction is a profess'd, express Imitation of CHRIST, a Forsaking the Fountain of living Water? And which is most likely to please him, a stubborn Refusing to imitate him, from political Considerations, or a sincere and hearty Endeavour to imitate him, without any political View, at the Hazard of Persecution and Defamation?

By what Construction can they be said to have forsaken the Rule of Faith, who believe and profess the Three Creeds, and who adhere to the Grand and Sacred Depositum, without Addition, Diminution, or Alteration?

Is it good Divinity to hold that no more is to be expected from the Letter, when by that is understood all outward Institutions, but only to point out unto us spiritual Things? Is not the Kernel conveyed as well as guarded by the Shell? Is not the Definition of a Sacrament, in the Church Catechism, "An outward visible Sign of an inward and
" spiritual Grace, given unto us, ordained by

CHRIST

“CHRIST himself; as a Means whereby we receive the same, and a Pledge to assure us thereof?” Doth not then the *outward visible Sign* in the LORD’S Supper convey the *inward and spiritual Grace* into the Souls of the *Susceptive*? And is this no more than a *pointing out of spiritual Things* to us?

ALTHOUGH *Baptism* is very properly a *Figure*, yet is it no more? Doth it not convey the *inward and spiritual Grace*, which is, “Death unto Sin, and a new Birth unto Righteousness?” And is it not called the *Laver of Regeneration*? *Tit.iii.5.*

Is not the *Body and Blood* of CHRIST verily and indeed *taken and received* in the LORD’S Supper, as the *inward Part, or Thing signified*?

Is there no Difference between performing *outward Institutions*, and trusting to that *Performance*?

Is *Mixing Water* with *Wine* fitly compared to *worshipping* the *Hostia*? Or doth it *banish* the SPIRIT? Or doth it hinder CHRIST from being *really present* in the *Holy Eucharist*? Or when present, doth it hinder his being *received* in it?

If the People you are pleased to call *Separatists* and *Turbulent* be a *Society*, must they not be governed by the *Rules of Society*? And can they honestly be said to *overturn Discipline*, because they do *exert* it?

If there is *Pride* in the Case, which shews most of it? They who refuse the *four Proposals* above mentioned, which they acknowledge are *not sinful*, and which are so far from being raised to *Articles of Faith*, that a meer *Compliance* with them is all that is asked, and that only as an *Expedient* for *Union*, not as *necessary* Things; or they who, being convinced of the *Necessity* of the *Alterations*,
do

do only desire them that are not so convinced to use them?

CAN CHRIST'S *Practice* be justly called *secret*, when *publicly attested* by the *Practice* of the *Primitive Church*, and the *Evidence* of the *Illuminated Fathers*?

OR can it be reasonably presumed, that the *Illuminated Christians* of the first and purest *Ages* should fall into any *Capital Error*, with one *Consent*, without *Discovery* or *Reproof* from the HOLY SPIRIT? Or can it be presumed that the HOLY GHOST would have *illuminated* them if they did? This were to make him *accessory*, at least by *Connivance*, to their *Sins*.

Is it not a pretty good *presumptive Evidence*, at least in Favour of any *Primitive Usage* which was *universal*, and in *Practice* during the *Æra* of the *Charismata*, if it passed without *Censure*, *Reproof*, or a *Discharge*, in those *Ages*? Because although *Errors* did creep in, and *Tares* were *sown* very early by the *Enemy*, yet they could not long *continue*, nor get *Head* without *Discovery* and *Condemnation* during the *Charismata*?

IF your *Eight Evidences* for the *Holy Scriptures*, which are very excellent, could be apply'd to the *Writings* of the *Fathers*, would not that bind you down to receive them as Part of the *sacred Canon*? If then they are not a Part of the *sacred Canon*, are they incapable of being *Evidences* for it, or *Explainers* of it?

I HAVE now gone through what I undertook at the Beginning, and wish from my Heart you had saved me the Labour, by not giving the Occasion; and if for the future you will write without *Reflections*, but with as strong
Argu-

Arguments as you please, or can, I shall not give you any farther Trouble of this Nature. You had formerly a very good and useful Talent of Writing; if you have lost it, I shall be very sorry for it; and if you will not bestow it upon this *Subject*, or your old Friends, you may let it alone and welcome. But if you do write, pray do it in such a *decent* Manner as will satisfy the World, that you are in quest of *Truth*, and not in a *Passion*, which is never the Way to make a Convert. Your own good Way, which is much more becoming, of *soft Words* and *hard Arguments*, got you many *Converts*, which, in the Way you are now in, you could never have made. Remember however, that the People you are pleased to call *Separatists*, have made Proposals for *Peace*, but your other Friends have made none; they must have *all* or *nothing*.

S I R,

Your very humble Servant.

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In Page 6. line 31. for *Alteration*, read *Restoration*.



